

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in this application. New claims 20-24 are presently added by amendment.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 3, 16, and 19 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant thanks the Examiner for careful consideration of these claims. Claims 18, 20, and 22 correspond to original claims 3, 16, and 19 written in independent form.

The Examiner rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The Examiner also rejected claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and rejected claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections. For the reasons set forth below, Applicant believes the claims are in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Amendments to Claims

Claims 1, 3, 9, 10, 14, 16, and 17 have been clarified by amendment.

Claim 18 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of claim 19, which the Examiner indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 19 has been cancelled.

New claim 20 corresponds to original claim 3 rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of original claim 1. New claim 21 is the same as claim 20 except for the following modification:

a frame mounting bracket, ~~the frame mounting bracket having an opening therethrough along an axial direction of the frame mounting bracket and~~ the central portion of the antisway bar being rotatably ~~secured through the opening~~ coupled to the frame mounting bracket.

New claim 22 corresponds to original claim 16 rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of original claim 14. New claim 23 recites the method steps of "coupling a front mounting bracket to the vehicle" and "coupling the center portion of the antisway bar into the bearing of the front mounting bracket."

New claim 24 recites that the antisway bar is secured at a "first mounting location being closer to the first end than the second end" and a "second mounting location being closer to the second end than the first end". Claim 24 further recites "the antisway bar being coupled to the chassis between the first mounting location and the second mounting location." Applicant submit that the cited references do not teach or suggest the limitations of claim 24.

No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Examiner stated that "Claim 17 recites 'an antisway bar', which was previously recited in claim 14. This is indefinite" (Office Action dated December 11, 2003, p. 2, paragraph 3 (hereinafter "Office Action p. __, lines __ or ¶ __")). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant has amended claim 17 to read "a stock antisway bar" to clarify that claim 17 does not necessarily refer to the antisway bar recited in claim 14. The stock antisway bar of claim 17 could be reinstalled pursuant to claim 14 but this is not necessarily so.

Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 17 meets the requirements of section 112, second paragraph. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,678,845 to Stuart.

Claim 9

The Examiner stated that "Stuart discloses an antisway bar (41); a first mounting bracket (23); a second mounting bracket (23)." The Examiner further explained that "The language of 'for coupling. . . ' and 'capable of receiving . . . ' in lines 4-8 are intended uses which are given little patentable weight; however the mounting brackets are capable of being mounted between a first king pin and a first airbag." (Office Action p. 3, lines 1-4).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant has amended claim 9 to more clearly define the claimed subject matter. Claim 9 as amended reads as follows:

9. A kit of components for installing a antisway bar in a vehicle having a chassis comprising a frame, a first king pin, a first airbag, a second king pin, and a second air bag, the kit comprising:
 - a first mounting bracket that is configured to be coupled between the first king pin and the first airbag;
 - a second mounting bracket that is configured to be coupled between the second king pin and the second airbag;
 - an antisway bar having a first end, a second end, and a central portion therebetween,
 - the first end being securable to the first mounting bracket,
 - the second end being securable to the second mounting bracket, and
 - the central portion being configured to be rotatably coupled to the vehicle chassis to stabilize the vehicle.

Applicant submits that Stuart fails to teach each element of claim 9 as currently amend. For example, Stuart fails to teach or suggest the central portion of the antisway bar being configured to be rotatably coupled to the vehicle. In contrast to the claimed invention, Stuart shows stabilizer torsion bar 41 mounted to a side beam 15 of the chassis 13 at distal ends 49. (See Stuart Figs. 1 and 2.) More specifically, Stuart shows the torsion bar extending beyond bushing brackets 63 to a distal ends 49 that are connected to side beams 15 with hanger brackets 17.

Moreover, Stuart provides no motivation to "invert" the configuration shown in Stuart, i.e. to secure the distal ends at the bushing brackets 63 and mount the central portion of the stabilizer bar at the hanger brackets 17. Such an "inverted" configuration would provide a substantially smaller torsion resistance than the configuration taught by Stuart because of the leverage that would be applied by the tubular side arms. Moreover, the torsion resistance would be further reduced because the tubular cross arm 41 would bear only torsion forces — not shear forces — in contrast to the configuration shown in Stuart.

Claim 10

Stuart also fails to teach or suggest the limitations of claim 10. Claim 10 recites the kit of claim 9 further including a front mounting bracket "capable of being secured to a front chassis section." The bracket includes "a bearing with an axial opening, wherein the central portion of the antisway bar is capable of passing through and being secured by the bearing when the kit is assembled into a vehicle chassis."

The Examiner stated that "Stuart shows a front bracket (27); the central portion of the antisway bar is capable of passing through the front bracket." Applicant respectfully traverses

this rejection. (Office Action p. 3, lines 4-5.) In contrast to claim 10, Stuart teaches that a torsion stabilizer bar 41 is connected to the chassis 13 not at a central portion as required by claim 10, but rather at opposite ends which are secured in hanger brackets 17 that connect to the chassis 13. (See Stuart Fig. 1.)

There is also no motivation to modify Stuart to provide the claimed invention. If the central portion of the antisway bar shown in Stuart were coupled to a front frame bracket, the antisway bar would be locked in place and would not function properly. Moreover because the central portion of the antisway bar in Stuart is co-axial with the bushing bracket 63, the antisway bar would not function properly even if the hanger brackets 17 were replaced by a central bracket: An axially-aligned configuration would apply no torsion to the torsion bar. Finally, as described in the above discussion of claim 9, if the system shown in Stuart were simply inverted, the capacity of the system to resist swaying forces would be substantially reduced.

Accordingly, it is believed that claims 9 and 10 fully complies with § 102(b). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-15, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,678,845 to Stuart in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,196,563 to Haycraft.

The Examiner also rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being upatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,056,305 to Pribyl in view of Haycraft.

The Examiner further rejected claim 8 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable alternatively over Stuart or Pribyl in view of Haycraft and U.S. Patent No. 6,213,221 to Lewallen.

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Rejection of Claims 1, 9 and 14 in view of Stuart and Haycraft

The Examiner stated that Stuart shows the elements of claims 1, 9, and 14 with the exception of a kingpin. (Office Action p. 4, lines 1-2.) The Examiner further stated that "Haycraft shows a steering axle which includes kingpin bore cylinders (22) that support kingpins" and asserted that "It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Stuart with the teachings of Haycraft to include an axle having kingpins in order to facilitate steering." (Office Action p. 4, lines 3-8.)

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. In contrast to applicant's claims, Stuart shows the (central) tubular cross arm 45 portion of the torsion arm 41 being mounted in bushing brackets 63 which are in turn mounted to air spring support plates 23.

More specifically, Applicant's Claim 1 as amended herein recites "the central portion being rotatably coupled to the chassis." Claim 9 recites "the central portion being configured to be rotatably coupled to the vehicle to stabilize the vehicle." Claim 14 recites "securing a central end of the antisway bar into a central mounting arrangement to stabilize the vehicle."

Neither Stuart nor Haycraft teaches or suggests these limitations of claims 1, 9 and 14. As described above, there is no motivation to modify Stuart to provide the claimed inventions: It would not be desirable to add a central bracket mounted to the cross-arm of Stuart because it would create three-point mounting configuration that would lock the arm in place. Moreover, if

the brackets 17 were removed from the system, the co-axial alignment of the bushing brackets 63 with the central portion of the bar (and any bearing coupled thereto) would preclude application of a torsion force to the torsion bar 41 and would obviate the need for rotational bearings. In addition, as previously described, it would also be undesirable to invert the mounting arrangement of Stuart to mount the torsion bar to the hanger brackets 17 and the distal ends at the other brackets 63, because this would substantially reduced the stabilizing effect of the torsion bar.

Applicants respectfully submit that Stuart and Haycraft do not teach each element of claims 1, 9 and 14.

Rejection of claims 1, 9, and 14 in view of Pribyl and Haycraft

The Examiner stated that Pribyl discloses "an antisway bar suspension assembly (see Figures 3 and 4) for use on a vehicle chassis comprising: a first mounting (26) . . . a second mounting arrangement (similar on other side of vehicle) . . . an antisway (40)" (Office Action, p. 5, lines 1-4.) The Examiner relied on Haycraft to provide a king pin in combination with the assembly of Pribyl. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Pribyl at least does not teach an antisway arm coupled to first and second airbags. To the contrary, Pribyl states that the torque arm 40 pivotably connects the second or rearward end of the beam 26 to the frame 28. Pribyl and Haycraft in combination do not teach or suggest each element of claim 1, 9, and 14.

Accordingly, it is believed that claim the claims fully comply with § 103(a). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

Claims 2, 4-8, 10-15, and 17

Applicants submit that claims 2, 4-8, 10-15, and 17 depend from an allowable independent claim and are allowable at least for this reason.

Claim 18

Claim 18 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 19, which the Examiner indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

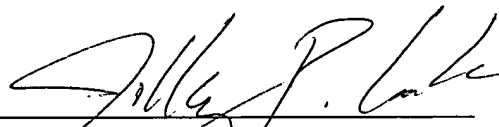
Accordingly, it is believed that these claims fully comply with § 103(a). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

Summary

In summary, each of claims 1-18 and 20-24 are in condition for allowance and a notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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